

Russian Public Opinion and its Role in the Security Policy between Russia,
the European Union, and NATO

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Abstract

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(Under the direction of Gary Marks)

This thesis focuses on security and defense policy between NATO, the European Union, and Russia in the period following the end of the Cold War and, in particular, the beginning of the 21st century. It looks at relations between the EU and Russia, NATO and Russia, and the EU and NATO in terms of the institutional framework and interests of each actor. It then goes on to examine the influence of Russian public opinion on foreign policy-making.

The perceived discrepancy between Russian public opinion and policy regarding NATO and the European Union is examined here; that is, policy seems to favor NATO, while the public favors the EU. However, it will be proven that it is not so much a discrepancy as a utilization of organizations to put forward Russia's interests, on which both the public and the policy elites agree.

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Introduction

Since the end of the Cold War, relations between NATO, the EU, and Russia have been impacted by differing interests, events, and institutions. These three factors have resulted in the dominant role of NATO in Russian security and defense policy, with the EU playing second fiddle to the long-time defender of the West. When viewed in realist terms, this is a logical outcome. However, public opinion in Russia does not support NATO over the EU, as can be seen in the reaction in Russia to both organizations' enlargements in the early 2000s. The question then emerges: why does this discrepancy exist between opinion and policy?

This thesis attempts to answer this question by showing that Russians perceive the European Union as a friendly economic entity, whereas NATO is perceived as a threatening military entity. Meanwhile, the lack of public understanding of the EU and ESDP means that Russians fail to realize that the institutional arrangement with NATO prevents it from threatening the Russian and CIS space in the same way that ESDP could. Russia is now better incorporated into NATO, as compared to the European Union, specifically in the realm of security and defense policy. This has come about due to the changing nature of NATO as a defensive alliance against Russia to an actor in the realm of international security, whose guiding mission is one of supporting international principles and rights while also being capable of military defense. Thus, the developing role of NATO allows it to be more of an actor in promoting security and stability in

problematic areas of the world, whether on the European or North American continents or “out-of-area” (Hunter/Rogov/Oliker 2002: 13). Such a capability gives NATO member-states an increased weight in diplomatic negotiations, allowing the international organization to step-in if necessary. Russia also has a greater interest in NATO based on its own self-promotion: in the Russian mind-set, the so-called “high politics” of foreign policy and international relations are the key policy area for a world power – a status that Russia associates with itself (Orlov/Fugfugosh 2006:46). This implies a view of NATO as the heavy-weight in international relations. Finally, ESDP is not a traditional defense pact (as NATO); rather, it is a collective security institution with less traditional power and influence. For Russia, the EU is an economic, not military, union and can more easily be associated in the public consciousness as a tool for economic growth and cultural connection, while NATO remains the perennial enemy.

By comparing the relations between Russia and the EU/ESDP and Russia and NATO, one can see that the Russia-NATO cooperation already has an institutional grounding that is only beginning in the security relations of the EU and Russia. Thus, the institutional interaction between Russia and the two organizations is divided by topic: economic development with the EU, in contrast to security and defense policy and alliance with NATO.

The organization of this thesis is as follows: Section One analyzes the relations between the EU and Russia, including its institutional grounding, such as in which pillars of the EU the EU-policies vis-à-vis Russia lie as well as the common institutions shared by these two actors. The European interests in Russia and, conversely, the Russian

interests in the EU are shown as mostly economic and as lacking substance in security and defense policy.

The second section analyzes the relations between NATO and Russia and how these former adversaries could overcome their history, allowing the common NATO-Russia institutions to function well, following the difficulties of the Kosovo War and NATO's eastern enlargement. The interests of the two actors focus on a partnership for security and stability in a military dimension. In contrast to the EU, for NATO and Russia there exists a stronger connection between rhetoric and action. Furthermore, the argument is put forth that the NATO-Russia relationship is – in security and defense policy – more important to Russia and that NATO has a more influential role in a world of new security threats. What this means for EU-NATO relations is discussed in the third section. Although NATO is more influential in certain areas, the EU and ESDP are not excluded from having a certain influence in Russian foreign policy, in particular in helping to coordinate Russia, NATO, and the EU against common threats.

Section Four looks at public opinion in Russia in three areas: Russia itself, the European Union, and NATO. Findings here indicate that Russians favor the EU overall, view NATO as aggressive and yet still favor greater partnership with NATO. Rosy public opinion of the EU, however, has not dictated a foreign policy as such.

The question of Russia vis-à-vis the EU and NATO is valid because following the NATO and EU enlargements in the Baltic and Central and Eastern European states, Russia will remain as the only sizeable European state left out of these organizations “its role in European politics will be drastically diminished if we do not want new dividing lines to appear in Europe” (Khudoley 2001: 35). Therefore, it is helpful to look to public

opinion as an indicator of how to approach Russian foreign policy if both the European Union and NATO want to build successful partnerships.

The second half of the twentieth century proved tumultuous for the western powers and Russia. Russia's position vis-à-vis the United States and Europe has been one of ally and adversary, beginning in the Second World War, from which Russia emerged victorious, along with the United States, Great Britain, and France. However, the victors' adversarial relationship began almost instantly once the bombs stopped falling and the Cold War began; whatever wartime cooperation that had been established disintegrated so that the former allies would be enemies for the next forty years.

Western foreign policy during this time focused not only on winning the "fight" against communism, but also on institution-building and cooperation. Two such institutions founded during this time are NATO and the European Union. NATO emerged as a defensive union, intended to defend the US and Europe. As stated in the North Atlantic Treaty, this institution was and is a military coalition: "They are determined to safeguard the freedom, common heritage, and civilisation of their peoples, founded on the principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law. They seek to promote stability and well-being in the North Atlantic area. They are resolved to unite their efforts for collective defence and the preservation of peace and security" (NATO). Meanwhile, the Europeans also founded their own institution aimed at defending Europe from another continental war through economic and political means, thus beginning the process of European integration through the European Economic Community (later the European Community, EC, and European Union, EU). The institutionalization of international relations and the dominance of the Cold War until 1990 resulted in an

international structure and relations that created continuity and comparative stability for Russia, NATO, and the EU.

However, since 1990 a series of international events have transpired that have altered the post-WWII international political structure and relations. Prominently, the end of the Cold War changed the geopolitical structure, leaving Russia preoccupied with its internal political developments and allowing the US and Europe to fill the gap and to expand their influences. For NATO, this meant a reform from a defensive position against Russia to defense via the promotion of democratic ideals and integration. Europe saw this as an opportunity to widen and deepen its political union in the Maastricht and Amsterdam treaties, including the formation of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and its component, the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP), thereby encouraging economic and democratic development in its neighboring states.

The semi-stable geopolitical scenario of the 1990s ended with the September 2001 terrorist attacks against the US. This attack highlighted a new geopolitical situation in which the state as actor is threatened by non-state actors with unconventional threats to international security. Together, these events all contributed to the current political relations between three of the most powerful actors in international politics today: NATO, the European Union, and Russia.

1. EU-Russian Relations

Following the accession of eight former Warsaw Pact countries into the European Union, EU-Russian relations required examination and modification. Indeed, the closer proximity of Russia lends itself to even greater importance to Europe in the twenty-first century. Thus, relations have been institutionalized and codified in order to further and protect the interests of both actors.

As with many other countries and/or regions with official EU relations, the EU's relations with Russia lie in two pillars of the European Union, as clarified in the Maastricht Treaty. The first pillar (the European Community) consists of the so-called "external relations", including energy policy, economic policy, and trade policy, as developed by the Commission. Policies in this pillar are determined based on the interests of the Union, in contrast to the second pillar (the Common Foreign and Security Policy), where the Council of Ministers has the responsibility for Russian-European relations in foreign policy areas still decided by member states, including the European Security and Defense Policy.

The pillar division of competencies has led EU-Russian relations to be institutionalized in both pillars. In order for Russia and the EU to better cooperate in the first pillar competences, the EU created the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) in 1994 with the goal of furthering cooperation between the EU and Russia in politics, economics, and culture, with a strategy emphasizing democracy and human

rights. Thus, the two actors have the opportunity to meet regularly at both the minister and the bureaucratic levels through the PCA. In the second pillar, institutionalized cooperation remains more limited. Russia is involved in the EU's Political and Security Committee (PSC), albeit in a consultative capacity rather than a partnership (as in NATO's NRC, as discussed later) (Spiegeleire 2002). Thus, the "institutional linkages" between Russia and the EU lead some to argue for ever-more "institutional solutions" when dissatisfaction with the current arrangement emerges. Yet, this often leads to under-utilized institutions, unable to solve the Russian "problem" (Spiegeleire 2002).

Despite the limitations of their "institutional linkages," the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement and its institutions exist not only to support Russia, but also to portray the EU in an advantageous manner and to contribute to realizing both actors' interests. From the EU's perspective, European interests in Russia are divided into four components, as outlined in the "Common Strategy of the European Union on Russia". These are: democracy, integration, security, and international challenges. First, the EU seeks a policy aimed at the further development of democracy, "rule of law", and public institutions in Russia, viewing the EU as a tool for change in Russia, much as it was in Eastern and Central Europe. Second, Europe wants to further integrate Russia into the European economic and social spaces, a step viewed as necessary considering their interdependence in trade and energy policy. Third, the EU seeks a partnership for security and stability with Russia: the Union desires that a "strategic partnership develop within the framework of a permanent policy and security dialogue designed to bring interests closer together and to respond jointly to some of the challenges to security on the European continent" (EU 1999: 2). However, this interest is sometimes negated by

the EU's desire for its own power of security and defense, in which third-party countries participate minimally and by the EU's tendency to lean to NATO rather than Russia in the planning of operation and military developments (Kuzmicheva 2006:4). Fourth, the EU seeks coordination against the growing common international challenges, such as energy, nuclear security, the environment, organized crime, and illegal immigration, in which Russia can play a role as former superpower and leader in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) (EU 1999: 3).

From the Russian perspective, Russian interests in the EU are divided into three areas, which can be complementary to the EU's interests: modernization, participation, and multipolarity. First, President Putin views the EU as a modernizing resource, as was the case for the Central and Eastern European states, although he does not seek EU-membership. For Russia, then, the EU as a modernizing resource means the economic advantages of a larger market and the pressure towards privatization and market democracy (Barysch 2004:11). Second, Russia wants to have a voice in European politics; therefore, Putin tries to present the common shared history and culture of Russia and Europe to reinforce the idea of Russia as "European": in his Berlin speech, Putin confirmed the European identity of Russia, the interest of a unitary Europe, and the building of a common European "house" (Mommsen 2004a: 495). Third, the new Russian foreign policy of 2000 (the "Putin Doctrine") draws on principles of the former Foreign Minister Primakov Doctrine, including building a multipolar world in which Russia is also a pole. The Primakov Doctrine also called for countering US policies on "principled issues": NATO enlargement, the Iraqi economic embargo, and Kosovo

(Torbakov 2000).¹ Therefore, Russia sees the EU as another pole and as a step to hindering the US's current hegemony (Mommsen 2004b: 420).

Recognition of the need for greater cooperation became apparent during the EU-Russia Summit in St. Petersburg in 2003, in which the EU and Russia agreed to create a new partnership, to be implemented in May 2005, called the four "Common Spaces." These spaces are: economy; security and justice; research, education, and culture; and external security; such cooperation closely parallels both the EU's and Russia's individual interests. Integration in both economies and peoples has resulted in a more open and better integrated market between Russia and Europe, the prospect of "visa-free" travel for Russians in the new EU member states, and research and education in the form of an educational exchange program between the two actors. In Russia this integration is often viewed as European recognition of their shared culture. In the last "Common Space", external security, the EU and Russia are seeking further cooperation in international relations and crisis management (EU-Russia Summit 2006; Lynch 2004: 105-106). The EU's eastern enlargement has brought a new degree of urgency to the "Common Spaces" agreement due to Russia's uneven dependence on the European market and the EU's geographical proximity. Furthermore, the "Common Spaces" are an important step in integrating Russia into the European fold without the political and economic repercussions of membership but also without alienating Russia: the danger exists that Russia will be isolated, if Europe defines itself as the European Union member states (Lynch 2004: 106).

¹ The foreign policy doctrine of former Foreign Minister Primakov means that "the *objective* is to restore Russia's position as a great power. The *means* to reach this objective is to consistently observe Russia's national interests. The *worldview* underlying the objective is that of a multipolar world" (Verpoest 2001: 88).

The question remains of whether these relations are symbolic or substantive. Forsberg states that both the EU and Russia have a tradition of making grand speeches but fail to follow-through with action (2004: 265). Both sides are often guilty of claiming to have had a successful dialogue, yet almost always without anything being implemented: “A situation has emerged where repeated declarations about the development of partnership at every summit do not conceal and, in fact, only emphasize the absence of joint long-term goals and an increasingly limited bilateral partnership” (Danilov 2005: 88).

The EU-Russia dialogue (the main result of their cooperation) is further complicated by the role of ESDP and Russia’s perceptions of its own international prominence. For example, the EU allows Russia no “special privileges” in their peacekeeping missions in Europe, a perceived insult, especially when considering that the terms of participation in ESDP operations are less attractive to Russia than the terms of participation in NATO operations. Other complications arise out of Russia still viewing the CIS countries as its own sphere of influence. It is both unwilling to consider cooperation with the EU in matters pertaining to these countries and wary of EU policies that could infringe on the Russian sphere (Kuzmicheva 2006:4).

It is important here to clarify how Russia views the EU and, particularly, the European Security and Defense Policy. To Russia, the EU is an economic and political actor who, at its current membership of twenty-five, imports half of Russia’s exports. Furthermore, EU member states are also transport states for Russian gas to other markets (Hubel 2004: 106). For Russia, ESDP is an experiment, a project, whose future is uncertain – a prospect that only enhances Russian hesitation (Lynch 2004: 107). In

addition to the question of longevity, the EU and Russia disagree on what, exactly, ESDP is. Russia sees ESDP as a policy that should help to build a “greater Europe,” as is in Russia’s interest.² Conversely, the EU views ESDP as a component, not the sole aspect, of its Common Foreign and Security Policy (Lynch 2004: 111).

² The EU Common Strategy attempted to clarify these interests, but the Russian response, the “Medium-Term Strategy for the development of relations between the Russian Federation and the EU” was “less promising in comparison with the EU document. It never clearly answered the question of Moscow’s attitude towards accelerating CFSP and the establishment of ESDP with its military dimension. According to this document, the partnership with the EU means support by Russia of the EU efforts in areas, which are important for the Union and where both parties’ interests coincide” (Verpoest 2001: 107).

2. NATO-Russia Relations

As with the European Union, the end of the Cold War has allowed relations between NATO and Russia to evolve from adversarial to cooperation through an institutionalized process of deeper integration. The initial steps of integration occurred in 1991 with the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, whose goal was to create cooperation between NATO and the newly independent Central and Eastern European states. Thus, Russia experienced the incursion of NATO into its sphere, leading Russia to join the Partnership for Peace (PfP) Program in 1994 and to send a peacekeeping mission to Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1996, the largest non-NATO military contingent of the operation.

Until 1996 the institutionalization of Russian relations occurred the same as the other post-Soviet countries; that is, a special relationship (PfP), without the requirements – or benefits – of NATO membership. However, an important development for Russia came in 1997 with the “NATO-Russia Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation, and Security” and the founding of a permanent committee for NATO-Russian dialogue, the Permanent Joint Committee (PJC), allowing Russian involvement in NATO to be taken one step farther. The goal of the PJC was to create a forum for regular discussion of security concerns between the two actors in order to build mutual trust. Taken together with Russia’s participation in Bosnia-Herzegovina, this agreement was a valuable step in the process of military and political cooperation.

The surprising ease of NATO-Russian institutionalization suffered a setback, however, with the NATO air campaign in Kosovo in 1999. Russia objected both publicly and within the PJC to the air campaign and further, refused to participate in the PJC. For Russia, NATO's disregard of its opinion prompted the feeling that Russian opinion had no value in NATO and that NATO would always remain a security threat (Vining 2002: 76). Likewise, NATO's enlargement (to Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic) in 1999 signaled to Russia that NATO perceived its boundaries differently than they were perceived by Russia. Indeed, "NATO had, in Russian eyes, ceased to be a defense alliance. Moreover, its new strategic doctrine – which stated that NATO would respond with force to threats other than an armed attack on Member States, to 'regional crises', for example, 'at the periphery of the Alliance' – had been seen in action in Serbia and it was perceived to pose a direct threat to Russia. Now that NATO had enlarged, the periphery of the Alliance was also the periphery of the Russian Federation and there was no reason why the new doctrine should not be used to underpin military action in areas that the Russian government considered to be within its own legitimate sphere of influence" (Light 2001: 15).

NATO-Russian relations improved following the crisis, as Russia played a leading role in the diplomatic solution to the Kosovo War and as NATO named a new Secretary General, Lord Robertson, who named Russian integration as one of his key goals. Within Russia, the 2000 election of Vladimir Putin gave way to a rapprochement. Russia's wish for greater integration into the Western framework reflected the Russian desire that it not be isolated from NATO and the European security apparatus (Smith/Timmins 2001: 80).

Other events that have brought NATO and Russia closer include the sinking of the Russian submarine Kursk in 2000 and the terrorist attack against the United States in 2001, which both demonstrated a need for further integration in the face of new international security threats and coordination problems. For this purpose, the NATO-Russia Council (NRC) was established in 2002 to replace the PJC. The members of the NRC are the twenty-six NATO members and Russia, who together must make decisions based on consensus. “The NATO-Russia Council (NRC) is a mechanism for consultation, consensus-building, cooperation, joint decision and joint action, in which individual NATO member states and Russia work as equal partners on a wide spectrum of security issues of common interest” (NATO-Russia Relations). Thus, they meet monthly at the ambassador level, twice yearly at the foreign and defense minister level and as needed at the summit level. The principles of equality and consensus in the NRC are highly valued by Russia and have helped to build trust in NATO, make the NRC successful, and to create a precedent for a better working relationship with the West (Danilov 2005: 80).

As a defensive alliance, NATO’s interests in Russia focus on supporting democratic institutions in Russia and on gaining Russian cooperation to confront the transnational threats present in the twenty-first century society. Russian democracy is important to NATO both as a model of a reformed society and as a way to help stabilize a large region, including the CIS countries.

The transnational threats, including terrorism, failed societies, and organized crime, also require military and strategic cooperation. NATO’s military interests in Russia focus less on capabilities and more on peacekeeping operations. “The NRC is

developing a generic concept for joint peacekeeping operations, which explores common approaches, establishes a framework for consultation, planning and decision-making during an emergency crisis, and defines issues related to joint training and exercises” (NATO 2004). It seeks interoperability in the military operations between NATO and Russia. In the strategic realm, NATO wants greater cooperation in fighting the new security threats. International terrorism, weapons proliferation, and the proliferation of missile technology are important for both actors, as these threats play a role in all societies.

In contrast to its economic and cultural interests in the EU, Russia’s interests in NATO are focused on security and defense elements. As demonstrated in the submarine Kursk accident, NATO-Russian cooperation can be instrumental in effective emergency response (Hunter/Rogov/Oliker 2002:4). Additionally, Russian concerns about nonproliferation and peacekeeping indicate the need for cooperation, as in the 1996 peacekeeping mission in Bosnia. The legacy of distrust of NATO that lingers in the Russian citizenry is such that Russia requires a voice in the NATO decision-making process in order for their cooperation to be viewed as legitimate. In an enlarged NATO, whose new members are former states of the Soviet Union, Russia has a greater inclination to participate where its former republics and allies also participate.

Russia’s concerns over NATO’s 2002 enlargement are again manifested in preventing a further NATO enlargement into the post-Soviet space. “Despite Russia’s concerns about NATO enlargement, we see that Russian attitudes towards the Alliance have grown more positive as a result of engagement in the NRC. Russia has said that it does not intend to join NATO, but its participation in the NRC and its partnership with

the Alliance extends across virtually three continents” (Burns/Vershbow 2004). This means that Russian interests place NATO in a central position vis-à-vis security, including when the former adversary undertakes a decision against the Russian preference, because of the knowledge that NATO possesses the capabilities to engage in the world that both Europe and Russia lack.

In the 1990s Russia experienced a sentiment of “return” to Europe, in which Russia sought a stronger union with the EU in order to weaken America’s influence. Since the election of Putin, however, Russia’s position vis-à-vis NATO and the EU has changed three times. After the Kosovo War and the perceived deception by NATO, Russia was eager to align itself with the EU, seeking in the October 2000 Summit to gain a voice for Russia within the EU, without undergoing the difficulties of membership. Russia wanted to use its interdependence with the EU in order to weaken NATO. One year later, neither Russia nor the EU was content with a closer partnership at the expense of NATO. The EU worried about the political consequences that its position with Russia would have on its relationship with the United States, while Russia was disappointed by the degree of integration offered by the EU. Finally, Putin found himself skeptical of the salience of ESDP, particularly after the events of September 2001 and the reassertion of NATO, invoking Article V and engaging in “out of area” operations (Lynch 2004: 106-107).

As in the EU-Russia relationship, the question of substance versus symbolism also plays a role in NATO-Russia relations. Although the NATO-Russia relationship is far from perfect, it does include a level of substance that sometimes lacks in other relations. NRC meeting statements, in which is shown both dialogue and practical

cooperation, reiterate how NATO and Russian policymakers strive to utilize both actors in international affairs. For example, the exercises for a coordinated response to a terrorist attack and the preparation of the Russian fleet for possible operations in the Mediterranean Sea are recent fields of cooperation (NRC Statement 2005).

The institutionalization of the NATO-Russia relationship, in particular the equality of Russia and the Russian vote in the NRC, gives Russia a real voice at the table, making it easier for Russia to cooperate with NATO (Forsberg 2004: 258). Russia sees that Washington leads NATO's developments and that, if Russia wants a voice, they must influence the US through NATO, rather than the EU. Putin tends towards a realist perspective when he places himself at the same level as the American president, believing that the two leaders of traditional powers can better cooperate than they can with the large leadership and bureaucracy of the European Union (Forsberg 2004:258).

The institutionalization differences between NATO and ESDP play a role in the question of why NATO is more important for Russia. The equality of Russia in the NRC allows Russia a vote and voice as well as the possibility to limit the scope of NATO's actions to outside of the so-called Russian space, a factor that does not exist in ESDP. Russia does not want to become an object of European policy (Lynch 2004: 100, 112). However, Russia remains outside the scope of NATO membership and has a voice only in certain areas agreed upon by NATO members.

For ESDP, the problem and question remains of how to create a security alliance with Russia that will further the interests of both sides (Lynch 2003: 18). How do they overcome "the significance of the USA as the primary security partner, sheer ignorance of each other and bureaucratic inertia, differences in the strategic culture and values as

well as in status and power perception?” (Forsberg 2004: 248). These problems are less prevalent in NATO-Russia relations, as their interests allow them to work together.

3. EU-NATO Relations

The relations between these two western actors (EU/ESDP and NATO) have been increasingly institutionalized through agreements and declarations since the adoption of the Amsterdam Treaty and the NATO enlargement. In December 2002, NATO and the EU completed an agreement for future relations based on “effective mutual consultation, dialogue, cooperation and transparency” with “equality and due regard for the decision-making autonomy and interests of the European Union and NATO” (Flournoy/Smith 2005: 65). They also declared here that NATO should remain the main organization for the collective defense of its members and that ESDP would be a subsidiary asset that would lead to stronger European participation within NATO missions (EU-NATO Declaration). This seems to be a logical outcome, given that NATO and the EU share many of the same members.

The Berlin Plus Agreement (2003) is an agreement regarding the capabilities of NATO and the EU. Due to the shared membership of NATO and the EU and because many of these members had previously allotted their military capabilities to NATO, Berlin Plus seeks to avoid duplication. Rather than a “division of labor,” Berlin Plus allows NATO resources to also be available to ESDP; it includes “(1) Identifying NATO military assets that will be available to the EU and specifying the procedures that will be used to choose and allocate those resources in a crisis; and (2) Specifying command options available to the EU Rapid Reaction Force” (Yesson 2001: 208). Berlin Plus was

first a success in Macedonia (EU Operation Concordia) and later in Bosnia, where NATO and the EU cooperated within the agreement (NATO Notes 2003). Together, the EU-NATO Joint Declaration and Berlin Plus have allowed for institutional cooperation between the EU's Political and Security Committee (PSC) and the NATO North Atlantic Council, between the EU and NATO's military committees, and between the General Secretary/High Representative of the EU and the General Secretary of NATO (EU-NATO Background Framework).

The 2003 Iraq War called into question the durability of western relations. It often seemed as though the North Atlantic Alliance had split into Anglo-American and Continental camps, such that ESDP, instead of NATO, would be required to defend Europe, while the US, either alone or with Great Britain, would engage elsewhere. For Russia, the lack of intra-EU cohesion exemplified the EU's inability to be a strong enough actor for the world stage (Barysch 2004: 39). The impact of the Iraq War debate for ESDP and NATO is clear: the two organizations would benefit from a clarification of their different mandates. As the EU has said itself, ESDP has the capability to react to crises and to practice crisis management, while NATO is a collective defense alliance, capable of quick response on a larger scale (Commission 2006: 4). This means that ESDP concentrates on tasks not included in Article V of the North Atlantic Treaty, including threats that do not qualify for a collective defense response (Verpoest 2001: 109).³

³ „As an insurance against any European revision of transatlantic relations, the US holds to the formula of the three ‘Ds’, which must be excluded when developing the EU’s ESDP and NATO’s ESDI: they are *Duplication*, *Discrimination* and *Decoupling*. For NATO’s part, Lord Robertson [NATO Secretary General] stated the need to ensure that ESDI will be based on three ‘Is’: *Improvement* (in European defense capabilities), *Inclusiveness* (and transparency for all Allies) and *Indivisibility* (of transatlantic security, based on shared values)” (Verpoest 2001: 113).

For Russia vis-à-vis the EU and NATO, “leverage”, both passive (the attraction of membership) and active (the “deliberate conditionality” of the pre-accession process) does not play a role (Vachudova 2005: 63). Conversely, Russia seeks the greatest possible advantage of association with both NATO and the EU, without the political, social, and economic upheavals that tend to accompany membership (Lynch 2003: 14). What does it mean for Russia when the famous “double integration” of NATO and the EU, which so successfully integrated Central and Eastern Europe, cannot take Russia on board? (Trenin 2005: 7).

4. Russian Public Opinion

While many indicators point towards the traditional realist interpretation of Russia vis-à-vis NATO and the European Union, including the primacy of actors and national interests, Peter Feaver states that realism can also embody two other tenets: “(1) the possibility that domestic politics influences the way the state acts in international relations; and (2) the possibility that nonmaterial factors like cultural norms or international institutions shape outcomes of interstate behavior” (Feaver et al. 2000: 166). An example of this is Hans Morgenthau’s perception that US public opinion shaped state policy (as in liberal democracies); thus, “Morgenthau believe that state behavior was subject to domestic political determinants and that state preferences could be shaped by nonmaterial factors” (Feaver et al. 2000: 166).

Therefore, looking at public opinion in Russia seems a valuable indicator in assessing relations in security and defense policy. Public opinion polls in Russia show preferences of NATO or the EU being strongly influenced by national history as well as economics. What – in policy – indicates an improvement in relations with NATO and an emphasis on the successful cooperation between Russia and NATO does not reflect the Russian public’s views on NATO and the EU. This section will look at Russian public opinion in three areas: Russian interests, Russian feelings on NATO, and Russian feelings on the EU.

Russian public opinion is greatly influenced by citizens' perceptions of Russia's national interests; chief among them is the restoration of Russia as a world power. This is much in keeping with leaders' view of Russia as a key player in international politics, that high politics should dominate policy-making, and that the EU and NATO should value Russia as a partner. A 2001 poll (Graph A) indicates "Russia's position on the world arena" as the top national interest, with 13 percent of Russians agreeing, in comparison to the "solution of economic and social problems", ranked fourth, with nine percent of Russians agreeing. Among Muscovites, national prestige ranks even higher, with 21 percent. (Russia's National Interests 2001). In 2003, 42% of respondents believed that Russian influence had grown and an increased number of Russians felt that decisions made in their country did not depend on Western nations (Graph B) (Russia's Place in the World 2003).

Indeed, the common conception that the predominant feeling in Russian society is one of anti-Western or anti-American sentiment was disproved in 2001, when 83% of Russians surveyed stated that they favored the development of partnerships with the EU, the US, or both ("The West" and Russian Society 2001). Yet despite favoring partnerships, difficulties still emerge within the Russian consciousness of such relations, including a "value-oriented and emotional component of national consciousness and pragmatic political views" ("The West" and Russian Society 2001). The difficulty exists in the history and events explained earlier: can Russians overcome defeat in the Cold War, EU and NATO expansion, and US hegemony in order to engage in substantive partnership without remaining dependent on the West? The increased number of neutral opinions regarding the West indicates a growing trend of pragmatism towards Western

relations. Thus, “although the West, and especially the United States, may threaten Russia’s interests, given the existing relations of forces, it is better to remove this threat by interesting the West in mutually profitable cooperation with Russia than involve the country in a wasteful and risky military and political confrontation” (“The West” and Russian Society 2001).

Foreign policy in democratic states is certainly subject to public opinion (“The West” and Russian Society 2001). In Russia, the pro-European views of the public would suggest a stronger affiliation with the EU than with NATO, which is identified in the Russian public with the United States. When asked in 2003 who is more important for developing a partnership, 31% responded the EU, compared to only 2 percent for the US, though partnership in equal measure was by far the most favored (51%) (Russia’s Place in the World 2003). It has been theorized that Russia supports greater integration amongst European countries in order to support the EU at the expense of NATO, as well as that Russia prefers a European influence on its policies, rather than a transatlantic or American influence. Though perhaps the situation in previous years, this argument no longer prevails. Views of the EU and ESDP as being useful or valuable due to their independence from the United States are no longer prevalent in politics and government, though they linger in the minds of some ordinary Russians, as discussed later. (Lynch 2003: 13).

The case for favoring relations with the European Union is fairly straight-forward. The EU lacks the residual antipathy of the Cold War that accompanies NATO, is perceived as good for Russian economic development, and would “ensure friendship and cooperation” between the two actors (Yefimov 2002). Indeed, “many people expect that

closer collaboration between Russia and Europe will bring mutual benefits and lead to the further development of commercial and cultural ties” (Russia and the European Union 2006). The EU is, therefore, perceived in an economic sense, without the notion of ESDP playing a role in Russian public opinion. It is a distinction that exists, rather, between the EU and NATO, rather than within the EU itself.

Furthermore, Russians view a strengthening of the EU as benefiting Russia, though “most people have no idea of what the European Union is, or what constitutes a member-state’s rights and duties” (Klimova 2003; The EU and Russia’s Interests 2005). Despite this lack of knowledge, when determining Russia’s interests in joining the European Union, 48% said in 2005 that it should (as opposed to 73% in 2003) (The EU and Russia’s Interests 2005). As with the benefits of cooperation with the EU, the perceived benefits of membership are economic in nature, often ignoring the earlier complaint of political dependency on the West.

The situation with NATO is more complex. This results from the fact that NATO is regarded more as an aggressive rather than defensive military bloc (58%), that NATO seems to pose a threat to Russian national interests (51%), and that Russian and NATO interests are more likely to diverge (47%) (Graph C). When one includes Russian public opinion of NATO enlargement, the negative view of NATO increases: more (40%) felt negatively towards the inclusion of seven eastern European states in NATO in 2004 and 52% of the public polled felt NATO’s expansion increased its military threat to Russia (Graph E) (NATO Expansion 2004).

Russians increasingly view NATO in an aggressive light (Graph F), provoked by historical and ideological influences in the Russian mindset. Despite NATO’s new

international role, only 5% of Russians surveyed in 2004 believe NATO has “peaceful goals: ‘fighting international terrorism’, ‘for world peace’, ‘improvement of relations between countries’, ‘to provide a stable situation in the world’” (Petrova 2004).

Furthermore, Russians are antagonized by the lack of weight given to Russian protests to NATO’s inclusion of former Soviet republics, allowing resentment to build over Russia’s lost superpower status (Shamseyeva 2004). Though it appears that Russian policy-makers have adapted to the international security system post-1990 and post-2001 by pursuing a policy of “pragmatism”, that is, “maintaining foreign policy strictly in line with state capabilities”, the public has been slower to adapt to the new role of NATO in the world (Lynch 2003: 11).

A paradox, then, exists not only in the public’s desire for greater cooperation with NATO, despite its being viewed as aggressive, but also in the level of partnership and cooperation between Russia and NATO as compared to the EU/ESDP. The shared experiences of the post-Cold War world have altered the geopolitical situation, such that NATO’s role in the world was revised, the EU founded its own security apparatus, and Russia must seek to re-establish its place and role. The moment has occurred in which former adversaries – Russia and NATO – have a stronger connection in security and defense than does a civil power – the EU – with Russia. The issue of quality versus quantity is also at play here, with relations with the European Union being a higher quantity but those with NATO being of a higher quality.

Conclusion

“NATO remains the organization that can most effectively defend the nations of Europe and North America against serious threats to their security today. Most of the European members of NATO still regard the Atlantic Alliance as the best guarantee of their security” (Bereuter/Lis 2003-2004: 155-156). The transatlantic debate of whether or not ESDP is a competitor to NATO is a debate of theory and not practice, simply because NATO and ESDP have different mandates and different goals.

This thesis has sought to analyze the relations between Russia, the European Union, and NATO in security and defense policy following the collapse of the Cold War system and the emergence of the European Security and Defense Policy. It has viewed the institutional preferences between the three actors from a realist perspective. Furthermore, the thesis looks at public opinion in Russia, discovering that policy outcomes are not always dictated by the public.

The security relations between NATO, the European Union, and Russia are complicated, at best. With the complete collapse of the known international system in the 1990s, policy-makers were forced to determine new steps towards partnership in an environment rife with emerging conflicts and threats. That Russia could overcome its historical animosity towards NATO, in particular, but also the European Union, is not a success of ideals but, rather, a calculated assessment of Russia's needs, including the need for survival.

Thus, the security relationship is complicated not only by history, but also by institutions. The institutionalization necessary in any international organization has created additional steps in the transatlantic security dialogue, especially when considering the large memberships of NATO and the European Union. NATO and the EU work to create compatible institutions, as in Berlin Plus, as well as specific institutions to involve Russia, such as NATO's NATO-Russia Council and the EU's Partnership and Cooperation Agreement. Nevertheless, these institutions are not always successful in incorporating Russia into the security dialogue, as happened with NATO's decision to intervene in Kosovo, against Russian objections.

Finally, the NATO-EU-Russia security relationship is complicated by the idea of values and norms. NATO's revised mission, post- Cold War, as a defender of human rights, in addition to collective security, is in keeping with the EU's notion of ESDP as a growing tool of foreign policy. Both organizations are engaged in missions around the world. Yet, Russia seems more wary of ESDP encroaching on the Russian "sphere" of CIS countries, for example, if the EU were to decide to actively oppose Russia's actions in Chechnya and Georgia, whereas the Russian vote in NATO comforts Russian leaders against NATO action in Russian affairs. It seems that the EU is perceived as more of a "watchdog" vis-à-vis its neighbors.

In NATO-EU-Russian relations, it is important to discuss the differences between NATO and the EU, as this thesis sought to do. One is purely military and defense, whereas the other is an economic and political union. This distinction is important when considering Russian responses to the EU. For Russia, the EU is an important economic partner, on whose markets the Russian economy largely depends. European proximity

and some feelings of a European identity in Russia further create a tendency towards Europe. Cultural and educational exchanges exist – in combination with economic linkages – to incorporate Russia into the European continent and prevent the creation of a new dividing line in Europe. Many Russians desire a return to prominence for Russia within a multipolar international system and see the EU as a step in that direction.

Conversely, NATO does not offer the economic advantages of the European Union nor does it promote multipolarity. For Russian citizens, this seems to impact how NATO is perceived. However, Russian policy-makers continue to value NATO – when, technically, they could partner with the EU in the cultural, economic, and even security realms – as the key organization of “high politics.” Additionally, the idea still persists of Russia and the US playing on equal ground, not through the forum of NATO.

That NATO’s NRC has created substantive co-operational policies and outcomes, and that it grants Russia a vote, are further incentives to continue the NATO-Russia dialogue.

Considering the historical and recent (again, Kosovo) conflicts between NATO and Russia, it is little wonder that Russian public opinion reflects a distrust of NATO. At the same time, public opinion reflects a desire to strengthen cooperation with NATO. At first glance, there appears to be a discrepancy between state policy – cooperation and partnership with NATO – and public opinion – viewing NATO as aggressive vis-à-vis Russia. However, both the public and policy-makers seem to realize that partnership with NATO is the most effective method of protecting Russian interests. Furthermore, considering that the public views national prestige as a top concern and that policy-makers view NATO partnership as key to returning to a place of greater influence, it becomes apparent that Russian policy and opinion are indeed aligned regarding NATO.

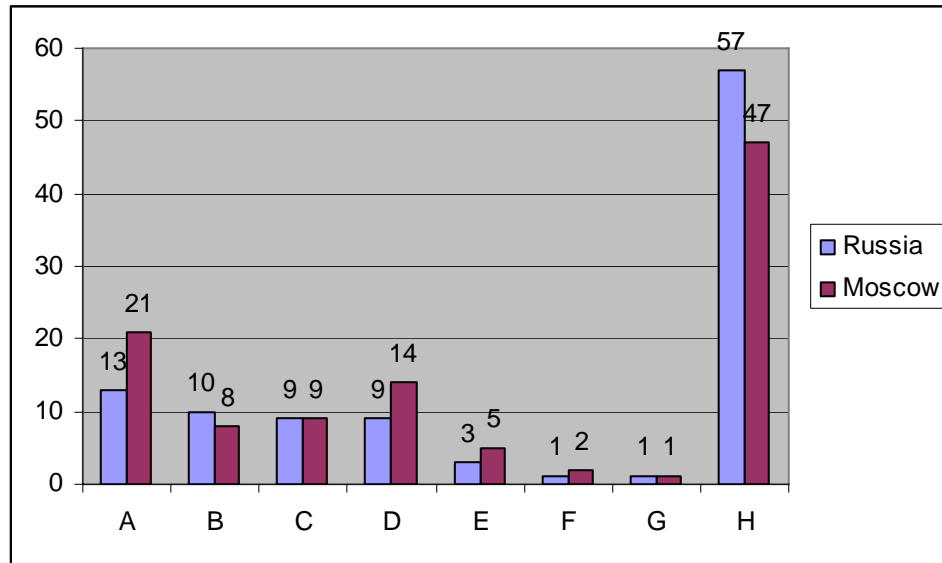
There is still a wariness of NATO that does not exist (or only minimally) for the European Union, as can be seen in Russian reaction to EU and NATO eastern enlargements in 2004. Forty percent of Russians had a negative response to NATO's enlargement (NATO Expansion 2004). Attitudes on the European Union were less negative, with some even favoring Russian membership in the EU (Attitudes on the EU 2003).

Thus, what first appeared to be a discrepancy between public opinion and policy in Russia – leading even to questions of liberal democracy (if following the logic of Hans Morgenthau) – is, in fact, less conclusive than originally thought. Certainly, policy-makers and the public can have differing views and concerns. Yet, regarding NATO and the EU in the realm of security and defense policy, the economic connection with the EU, NATO's role in “high politics”, and institutional linkages have combined to support a Russian foreign policy, including facets other than defense, that does not prefer one organization at the expense of the other but, rather, uses the strengths of each to form the most beneficial relations for Russia.

Appendix

GRAPH A: Russian National Interests

What are, in your opinion, the national interests of Russia today? (open-ended question)



Source: "Russia's National Interests 2001"

A = Russia's position in the world arena

B = Preserving peace and integrity in the country

C = Solution of national-cultural problems

D = Solution of economic and social problems

E = Solution of society's and citizen's problems

F = Integration of the former republics of the USSR

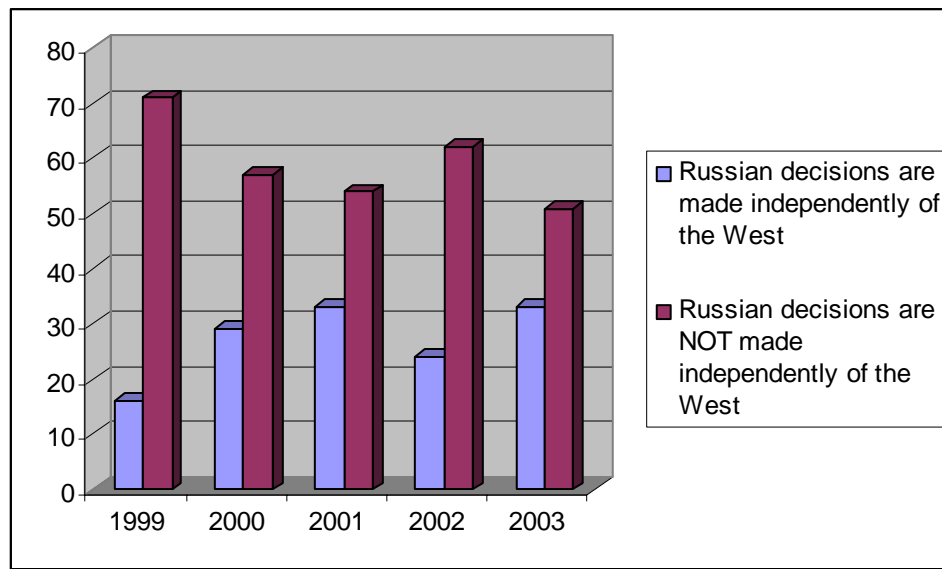
G = Other

H = No response, wrong response

GRAPH B: Russia's Reliance on the West

Some believe that in making decisions, Russia doesn't depend on the leading western nations, while others hold that Russia's decisions depend on the opinion of the West.

Which of these two views is closest to your own?



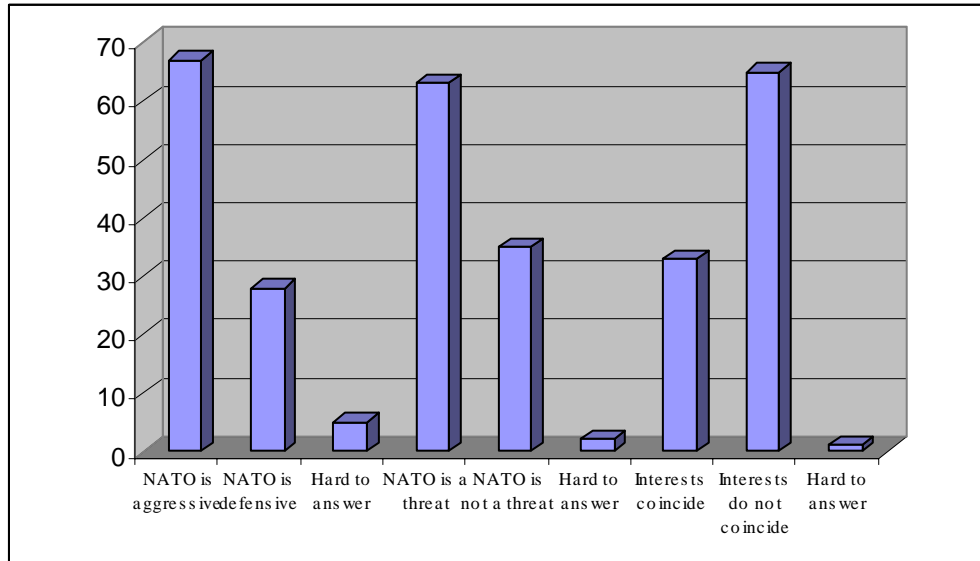
Source: *"Russia's Place in the World 2003"*

GRAPH C: Expert Poll

Is NATO an Aggressive or Defensive Organization?

Is NATO a Threat to Russia?

Do NATO's and Russia's Interests Coincide?



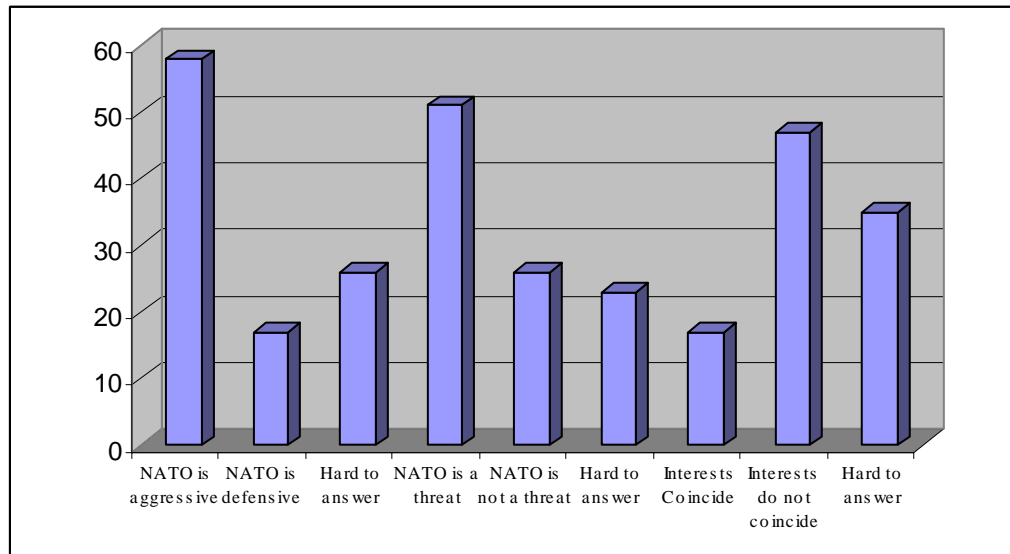
Source: "NATO Expansion 2004, Expert Poll"

GRAPH D: Population Poll

Is NATO an Aggressive or Defensive Organization?

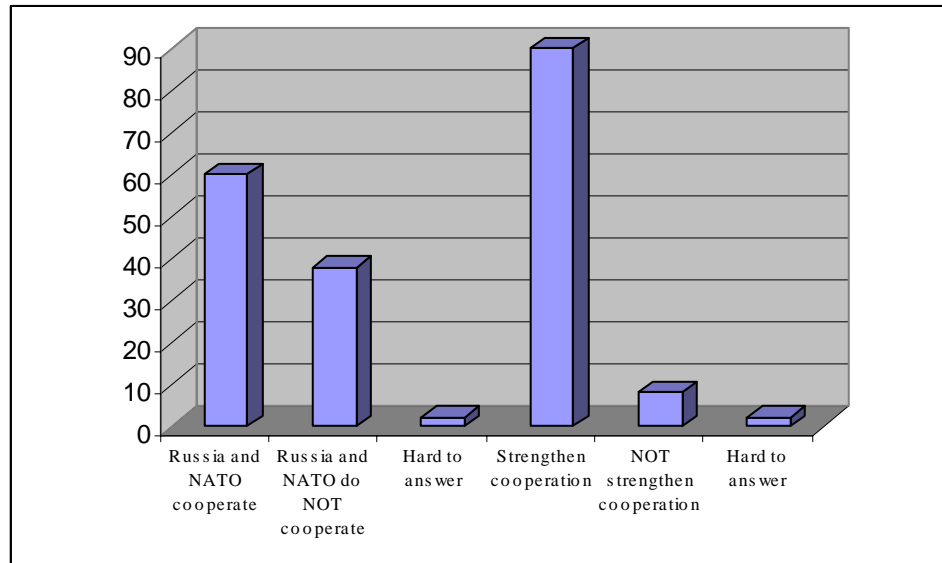
Is NATO a Threat to Russia?

Do NATO's and Russia's Interests Coincide?



Source: "NATO Expansion 2004, Population Poll"

GRAPH E: Should Russia and NATO Cooperate?



Source: "NATO Expansion 2004"

GRAPH F: What is NATO's Aim?

NATO is...	1997	2001	2002	2004
Aggressive	38	50	54	58
Defensive	24	26	24	17

Source: Petrova 2004, "What is NATO's Aim?"

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